

The WHITE FEATHER

By LECHMERE WORRALL AND J. E. HAROLD TERRY

An Innocent-Looking Woman About Fifty Years Old Sat Quietly Sketching the Beautiful Sea View and the Picturesque Harbor of Sea Crest While England Prepared for War

Less Than Three Years Later Other Apparently Undesigning People Drew the Harbor Defenses of the United States and Watched the American Forces Put Out to Sea

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The story opens in the West Crest private hotel in an English seacoast town, where CHARLES SANDERSON, serving in the English Admiralty, his daughter, MOLLY, and her fiancée, FRAULEIN SCHROEDER, a colorless little German woman, are dining. Fritze, a young English soldier, is also present. The scene is set in a room with a view of the harbor. Molly is sketching the view. The characters are introduced and their relationships are established.

have been admiring your uniform all the time." "Now you are making fun of me, Mrs. Lee," protested Pennicuk. "Though perhaps it doesn't look so bad when I'm sitting down. The coat's much too short. Must have been made for a much smaller chap than me. Still, it's better than nothing. I feel more businesslike."

"It pokes horribly in the back," said Molly, tugging at it as she spoke and then giving little pats to try to make it set right over his chest and shoulders, a proceeding of which she hoped notice was taken through a certain eyeglass on the other side of the veranda.

"Walk away from me, Percy," commanded Molly in the best dressmaker's manner, "and let me see the effect."

He obeyed, turning round at the end of the veranda, where a curtain of Virginia creeper, turned to flame, hung from the edge of the roof to the veranda rail. Molly went after him and gave his coat a few more little settling tugs. Mr. Pollock watched them, well pleased, out of the corner of his eye.

Brent, apparently unperturbed, glanced through his eyeglass, and when Miriam rose and strolled on to the lawn he went after her.

Mr. Pollock gazed at the backs of Brent and his companion as they stood absorbed in a low-toned conversation, with growing indignation on his expressive countenance. He now rose, abandoning Miss Myrtle's conversation in midair, so to speak, and strode over to where his daughter and Percy were standing.

"Really, that fellow Brent has no sense of decency or shame whatever," he announced. "His brazen effrontery about the white feather at tea is nearly equalled by Mrs. Lee. Cross questioning me like that, indeed! and now look at 'em! Might have known each other for years! An outrageous flirtation, I call it."

"Chris found he knew her husband in South Africa," said Molly, trying to speak casually.

"Husband! I shouldn't be surprised—" began Mr. Pollock, and then turned off with a cough.

"I must say," said Percy hesitatingly, "it does seem odd, Brent not doing anything. Surely he could get some kind of a home billet if he doesn't want to enlist."

"I'm sure Chris has very good reasons. I know he has. He told me," said Molly defiantly.

"Did he tell you what they were or only that he had 'em?" demanded Mr. Pollock, placing his finger tips together in a judicial manner and gazing at her over the top of his pince-nez.

"Exactly," said Mr. Pollock. "I suppose even Brent draws the line at admitting to you that he is a coward."

"Father!" cried Molly sharply. "But it does look queer, you must see for yourself, Molly," urged Percy. "It's you we're thinking of, your father said I. It puts you in such a hateful position and you aren't happy about it, you know you aren't, Molly."

"Oh, don't argue, Percy," flashed Molly irritably. Mr. Brent has his own reasons for doing what he is doing. I don't know what they are, but I am quite satisfied by his assurance that they are good enough."

"Fiddlesticks!" said her father rudely. "If he has reasons they aren't good enough, or he could explain them."

"Oh, you don't either of you understand!" replied Molly, speaking low but very fast and with a heightened color in her cheeks. "You are just men and you want to judge every one by yourselves. I don't judge at all. You reason about things, but I know them. I love Chris. Yes, I do, so there! I don't love him for being this or that; I just love him because he's himself, and even if he were entirely wrong in everything you say I'd just go on loving him all the more," and Molly went swiftly along the veranda and in at the house door.

"Dear, dear!" ejaculated Mr. Pollock; "girls are damn funny things, Percy. Of course, I understand Molly perfectly; she's

idealistic, cared to win Molly, but Mr. Pollock's tone was so intensely confident that he could not help a faint gleam of hope darting into his mind.

"You are very good, sir—thanks awfully," he said, "but I don't want Molly made unhappy."

"You leave it to me, my boy," said Mr. Pollock; "tact and firmness, that's what is wanted, tact and firmness."

Meanwhile Miriam and Brent were strolling idly about the lawn.

"I suppose the others are all in the sitting room," remarked Miriam, glancing toward the French window which stood open at the farther end of the veranda from the tea party.

A little shudder ran through Miriam, strong as her nerves were. The intrigue,

and responsible, a religious fanatic. She was only devoted to her own family, who were all more or less congenial idiots, and she murdered quite ruthlessly for their benefit. Translate relations into terms of country and I think you will find the same phenomenon in Fraulein Schroeder. She's not a type of her country, of course. One must not be unfair enough to think that it simply is that the authorities had the genius to see her type and make use of her."

"Kit, you positively make me go cold down my back. I shall have horrid visions tonight of fraulein murdering us all in our beds."

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far end of the veranda and in through the French windows of the sitting room, shutting them after her with true German precision.

In the sitting room Mrs. Sanderson was awaiting with outward composure fraulein's return and the telegram from her son. She had not turned on the light, though the room, owing to the slope of the veranda roof outside, was already too dim for her to see to read, as her sight was not good. But like every other woman in the household she was knitting—a comforter for Charles.

"Ah, you finished soon, Luise," she said as the little brown figure stepped into the room. "Have you got what you wanted?"

"Yes, I have been most lucky," replied fraulein, looking down at her bag. "The light was good, all the English were at their tea, the cliffs were deserted; but one-half hour and my drawings were complete. Every detail of the harbor defenses."

"I congratulate you," said Mrs. Sanderson cordially.

"Thank dir, meine kameradin."

"Sah!" cautioned Mrs. Sanderson, "we must still be careful."

The little fraulein shrugged her shoulders. "Ach," she said, "the English have no ears, how then should their walls have them? I saw all your English at their tea. Had I brought the news that our admiral had landed on their shores, they would still have demanded a second cup before asking where he had landed." She began to pace quickly up and down the room, her eyes, usually so mild, gleaming from behind their gold-rimmed spectacles. Her fall brown skirts swinging with the energy of her movements. "They are fools, these English," she went on. "Fools and the sons of fools. They dwell in their fool's paradises, and bitter shall be their awakening for it into our hands that the Lord has delivered them."

"It is good that we have been able to take a part in the great work for the Fatherland," replied Mrs. Sanderson with deep staidity but less vehemence than fraulein.

"And a great part," cried fraulein ecstatically. "Have you news from Charles yet?"

"Not yet. I expect a telegram from him any moment."

"And the spy, the traitor? Has Fritz discovered anything?"

"I will ring and ask him," said Mrs. Sanderson, crossing to the bell. "He did suspect Pollock, I know, an unlikely person it seems to me, but Charles said something about Brent which seems to me more unlikely still."

"Ach, Brent, he seems an idiot and a coward. Even his own people despise him. All the same," replied fraulein, "we must suspect every one at present and I have a curious feeling about Brent. It seems to me almost at times as though something in me recognized something in him, and I say to myself, 'Young man, are fall brown such a fool as you look?' And then I test him with something and watch him carefully, and lo! he is even a worse fool than he looks. And since I prefer trusting to reason rather than to feelings which are quite irrational, I have come to the conclusion that my reason is probably right and that he is a fool. But all the same one must be careful. Ach, here is Fritz."

"Are they still at tea, Fritz?" asked Mrs. Sanderson.

"They are at last finishing," replied Fritz. "I have just taken them of toast the fourth time. Oh, dat it might shoke dem in de dream!"

"Business, business," said fraulein tartly. "Have you discovered anything yet?"

"Nodines for sure, but I have mine eyes fixed upon one man."

"Ah, Brent," asked fraulein quickly.

"No, Mistair Pollock, it is always Mistair Pollock I suspect. I leave him by himself

not ever. I keep on thinking of what he talk on that telephone about German friends. You do well to watch him, Fritz," said fraulein—it was curious how she took the lead in the presence of Mrs. Sanderson. "I do not know that Mr. Pollock is through enough to have found out anything, yet he has a bad and cruel face like a coddish. He dately you find out anything more, Fritz."

"What about the plan of the mine field, that Mr. Charles gave you?" said Mrs. Sanderson. "Has it gone?"

Fritze waved his arms with an enthusiastic gesture. "All is ready. I have the leg of my last, my most beautiful pig, and straight to his beloved Germany."

"And your drawings, Luise?" said Mrs. Sanderson, turning to her.

"It is necessary that I make tracings from them," explained fraulein. "The originals are for the pleasure of my friends. Understand, they are works of art, of great strategical value. We must arrange about that later, but now—as I must arrange I do not know that Mr. Pollock is through enough to have found out anything, yet he has a bad and cruel face like a coddish. He dately you find out anything more, Fritz."

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"Fraulein is still out, remarked Brent, 'busying herself with a sketchbook.'

"Busying herself with a sketch book. By the way, Miriam," he went on, "as you know, I am like a woman in that I go much more by intuition and feeling than by reason. I told you that fraulein always seemed to me the sinister spot in this house. It may be absurd to you to say it, but I have a curious feeling that she, and not Sanderson or his mother or the excitable Fritz, is the leader here; they are all mere or less fanatics, of course, but Fritz gets well paid for what he does, and he is animated chiefly by hatred of the English. It is certainly the object of Mrs. Sanderson's life, to which she has trained Charles up, but with fraulein it's more than that. It's her religion, her passion."

"She seems so normal," observed Miriam.

"That's because of her iron self-control," replied Brent. "But I should not be surprised if she turned out to be the type of religious fanatic which is quite the most dangerous and ruthless thing in the world. Do you remember the case of Euphrasia Merrett?"

"No, who's she?" asked Miriam. "I don't delve into such curious subjects as you, you know, Kit."

"She was a notorious French murderess," replied Brent, "and though perfectly sane

my own child; but, upon my word, there are times when she almost puzzles me."

"I'm afraid one thing's clear enough," said Pennicuk a little dearily, "and that is that she's quite hopelessly in love with Brent and that nothing will get her out of it."

"Nonsense, nonsense," replied Mr. Pollock. "What does a girl of her age know about love? I have always been most careful that she should never know about anything. A pretty little thing it would be if I can't influence my own daughter now. You know, Pennicuk, I used to hope that you and she—"

Percy shook his head. "So did I, but it's no go, sir. Molly won't look at any one but Brent. She hasn't ever since she met him. And today she seems to have grown or developed somehow. Don't know how to put it. But anyway, I don't stand an earthly show, less now than ever."

"You forget my influence and authority, my boy," said Mr. Pollock heartily. "I shall insist on it all being off between her and Brent. This flirtation with Mrs. Lee is the last straw, and then, well—there is such a thing as catching a person on the rebound, you know."

"That did not sound at all the way in which Percy, who was young enough to be

the uncertainty all about her of which only she and Christopher were aware, the darkness in which of necessity they were groping, trusting very much to luck—all this, though in its way stimulating, yet every now and then overcame her with a premonition of disaster. And now this cold, matter-of-fact talk about criminal types added to her sense of discomfort. She glanced up again at Brent, and he gave an almost imperceptible but reassuring wink of his eyelid.

"Don't you worry any," he advised; "we're going to come out on top all right."

"It seems to me sometimes," said Miriam hesitatingly, "that you trust too much to intuition and to luck. Wouldn't it be better just to have the whole household arrested now? We've got enough evidence."

"Not on your life," said Brent. "You forget about Uzz. He's got to be settled with, too, and I don't mean to miss him if I can help it."

Fraulein was coming up through the garden, a little rusty brown figure, the black silk bag, in which she kept her knitting and other things, tucked under one arm, the inevitable umbrella under the other. She looked very insignificant, very quiet, very placid. She nodded in her dry little way to the assembled company as she went to the

of the veranda and in through the French windows of the sitting room, shutting them after her with true German precision.

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Father Takes a Stand

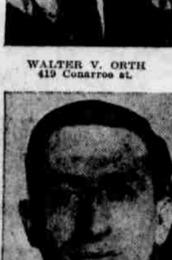
MR. POLLOCK pulled himself together. "My dear Mrs. Lee," he began, "there is nobody, I assure you, nobody who would offer himself to his country more readily than I should if it were only possible. But unfortunately I have great responsibilities of a private nature which, even if, as you so kindly imply, I could pass for a younger man than I am, would not permit me to well, to risk my life on the battlefield."

"You are prepared to give me details of those responsibilities?" persisted Mrs. Lee.

"My dear madam," began Mr. Pollock, genuinely indignant.

"Don't think me impertinent," said Miriam. "I didn't expect you would be able to tell me. I only just wanted to bring home to you the fact that there are quite a number of men, besides yourself, who have responsibilities which they cannot reveal to the world, but which are more than sufficient to justify them in staying at home. She spoke quietly, but with an almost passionate conviction which must have struck on her own ears, for she suddenly gave a little laugh. "Ah, well, we are being very serious over nothing at all," she said. "What have you been doing with yourself all this afternoon, Mr. Pennicuk? You are our chief source of interest, you know. I

PHILADELPHIA'S HALL OF FAME WILL BE BUILT BY THESE MEN PICKED TO GO TO FRANCE

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 JAMES HENRY 1229 Carlton st.	 JOHN CLARK 1411 Arch st.	 MICHAEL GRATZ 1925 Spruce st.	 EDWARD KROUGH 3227 N. 13th st.	<p>HAS YOUR LOCAL DRAFT BOARD ACCEPTED YOU? ARE YOU READY TO JOIN THE NEW UNITED STATES ARMY WITHOUT CLAIMING EXEMPTION? IF SO, YOUR PICTURE BELONGS ON THIS PAGE SEND YOUR LATEST PHOTOGRAPH TO THE PICTORIAL EDITOR. If you have no photograph, your picture will be taken without charge if you present yourself between the hours of 9 a. m. and 5 p. m. to the PHOTOGRAPHIC DEPARTMENT of the Evening Ledger</p>		 DINTER GREGOR 323 N. 9th st.	 NICHOLAS PICCOLI 203 Simpson rd., Ardmore.	 CHARLES TORRE 501 Climer st.	 WALLACE ZIARKO 2257 Carlton st.
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(CONTINUED TOMORROW)